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Contact: Nancy Loe  
Cal Poly Kennedy Library  
(805) 756-2305; [nloe@calpoly.edu](mailto:nloe@calpoly.edu)

### **Cal Poly Kennedy Library Awarded University's First NEH Grant To Catalog 'National Treasure' of Julia Morgan Materials**

SAN LUIS OBISPO – The country's largest archives by and about renowned architect Julia Morgan, housed in the Special Collections Department of Cal Poly's Kennedy Library, will be cataloged for easy access by scholars and students worldwide, thanks to a recent National Endowment for the Humanities grant and matching funds from the university.

The \$249,000 NEH grant – the university's first – provides two years of funding to preserve, arrange and describe its extensive Morgan collections and to create digital guides to the collections according to national standards. Included in the project are thousands of original architectural plans, drawings, photographs, sketchbooks, journals, correspondence and other documents chronicling her education in Paris at the turn of the century and her prolific and trailblazing career that helped open the field of architecture for women.

Contrary to popular legend that Morgan destroyed the records of her practice, she actually preserved thousands of personal and professional documents, which were given to California Polytechnic State University (Cal Poly) by her heirs. Additional donations of original materials from other benefactors have created the country's largest repository of Morgan materials, which have been used by researchers from six countries and 32 states for scholarly research, lectures, biographies, children's books, exhibitions, historic house interpretation and building restoration, as well as for documentaries on PBS, the BBC and other cable channels.

Cal Poly's award comes from the NEH division that supports projects to preserve and create intellectual access to collections considered highly important for research, education and public programming in the humanities. "The NEH grant recognizes the Morgan collections at Cal Poly as a national treasure. Interest in Morgan to this point has been fueled primarily by her masterwork, Hearst Castle, at San Simeon.

This project will enable Cal Poly to assist researchers interested not only in Hearst Castle, but also in her numerous other commissions and her influence on architectural movements in California in the early 20th century, said the grant's author and project director Nancy Loe, assistant dean for collections management and special collections at Cal Poly's Kennedy Library.

The award comes less than a year after the university celebrated the centennial of Julia Morgan's licensing as the first female architect in California. Morgan was also the first woman to earn certification in architecture from the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris.

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[polynews@calpoly.edu](mailto:polynews@calpoly.edu)